

Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana and Illinois, as well as the District of Columbia.

Currently, no sites visited in these States are recognized as Lewis and Clark National Historic Landmarks nor are they locations along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. I am pleased that Title II of H.R. 3819 implements a study that begins the process towards obtaining recognition for these sites east of the Mississippi.

On January 18, Jefferson's Monticello hosted the commencement of the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration that will continue through 2006. This was the first signature event of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, and hopefully, once the study has been completed, the National Park Service will designate Monticello and other parts of the Eastern Legacy as official Lewis and Clark trail sites.

I believe that it is appropriate to include the route followed by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, whether independently or together, in the preparation and return phases of the expedition. The Eastern Legacy should rightfully be included in the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. H.R. 3819 is a positive step towards properly recognizing and honoring the Eastern Legacy of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

THE FAILINGS OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, if Congress were to receive a fiscal responsibility report card, there would not be a single passing grade. Congress should receive an "F" for failing when it comes to taking care of our Nation's fiscal security. Congress should receive an "F" for failing to pass a budget resolution conference report.

Both the Senate and the House are controlled by the same party, and yet no agreement was reached on simply setting a budget that Congress should stick to. So much for taking fiscal responsibility seriously.

Congress should receive an "F" for so poorly managing the taxpayers' money that the debt ceiling will have to be raised by over \$8 trillion in just a few short months.

For the third time in 3 years, the majority party needs to increase the debt limit. Last year we saw the largest debt limit increase in history, \$984 billion, Mr. Speaker, and now we are looking at another \$690 billion increase just to keep the Federal Government running.

Congress should receive an "F" for failing to pass spending caps and pay-as-you-go legislation, or PAYGO. Pay-as-you-go is a common-sense piece of legislation that Congress ought to pass if we are going to be serious about putting this fiscal House back in order. Simply put, PAYGO provides the blue-

print for getting our Nation out of the red ink that we are swimming in.

The PAYGO rules Congress and the President enacted in 1990 were an important part in getting a handle on the deficits in the early 1990s and getting the budget back into balance. The pay-as-you-go rules enacted in 1990 have been tested, and they have passed. There is no question that significantly improved the responsibility and accountability of the budget process and were instrumental in getting from large deficits in the 1980s and early 1990s to budget surpluses in the late 1990s.

The one area that this Congress and administration has excelled in is its ability to run up massive amounts of debt. This year alone we are expected to run approximately a \$425 billion deficit, just this year alone, the worst deficit in the United States history, every dime of which must be paid back.

Had Congress and the administration worked in a bipartisan manner with the Blue Dog Coalition, they could have passed a budget and PAYGO. Instead, they forged a partisan path, and the American people are left with neither. The American people deserve a better grade than failure on fiscal responsibility from their elected officials. The President is fond of saying it is the people's money, and he is correct. It is the people's money. And I believe that the people deserve to have our Nation managed in a fiscally responsible manner.

Let us stop playing politics with our financial security. Instead, pass real, meaningful PAYGO legislation and get our Nation's fiscal health back in order.

WERE WE RIGHT TO REMOVE SADDAM?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, recent reports have done much to identify the mistakes, shortcomings and gaps in U.S. intelligence about Iraq. There is no doubt that the information we had about the weapons programs of Saddam Hussein was incomplete and, to some degree, inaccurate. However, these reports also demonstrate that in a number of respects, U.S. intelligence got it right. Saddam Hussein did possess forbidden weapons, particularly missiles. Saddam and his cronies did indeed have contact and discussions at some level with al Qaeda and various terrorist groups. Terrorists did in fact use Iraq as a sanctuary for training and as a source of supply.

Finally, if British reports are to be believed, President Bush was correct when he warned that Saddam was seeking nuclear material in Africa.

The real question, Mr. Speaker, is not whether U.S. intelligence was perfect, but whether America was right to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

Not so long ago, few Americans professed doubts about removing Saddam. In 1998, President Clinton made regime change in Iraq the goal of U.S. policy. In doing so, he received bipartisan congressional support. When President Bush made the case for war against Saddam in 2002, he, too, received bipartisan support in Congress.

Lest we forget who and what Saddam Hussein was, we should remind ourselves of his actions over the course of his political career. Saddam is a man who launched two regional wars in the Middle East. One cost nearly a million lives. The other required an international military coalition led by the United States to free the victim. Saddam Hussein has actively pursued and employed weapons of mass destruction since the 1980s. He has trained, armed and patronized terrorists of various sorts. He attempted to assassinate a United States President, and his forces routinely tried to down U.S. and allied planes that were responsible for enforcing U.S. sanctioned no-fly zones.

Saddam's crimes and atrocities were not just directed against his neighbors in the international community. The 20-year-plus reign of terror he unleashed against his fellow Iraqis almost defies belief. The countless murders, torture sessions and rapes made him one of the 20th century's most feared and ferocious dictators. He gassed thousands of his own Kurdish citizens, poisoned the environment of those Arab marsh tribes that opposed his rule and looted the country of its wealth. When Saddam's own people rose up against him in 1991 at our urging, he butchered them by the tens of thousands.

When American and Coalition forces finally came to Iraq 12 years later, what did they find? Not, at least yet, stockpiles of WMD. They found something far worse. Dozens of mass graves containing an estimated 400,000 men, women and children murdered by the minions of Saddam Hussein.

I invite my colleagues who so quickly and correctly condemn every shortcoming in the Coalition occupation of Iraq to spend equal time cataloging and criticizing the atrocities of the Hussein regime. If they need any help finding the information, they should talk to the lucky survivors and visit with the thousands of grieving family members who can acquaint them with the full scope of Saddam's crimes.

Once they do, I suspect they will agree with one young American soldier I met while in Iraq. He said, "The real question is not why we came to Iraq but why the whole world was not here years ago."

Would it have been better to leave Saddam in power? In power to do what? To resume his unending efforts to acquire and develop WMDs, to expand, develop and formalize his evolving relationship with al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, to continue murdering his domestic opponents by the thousands?

When the history of Saddam Hussein and the liberation of Iraq is written, Mr. Speaker, there will be many lessons to learn. We will wonder why our intelligence was not better. We will question some of the decisions we made during the occupation. We will be ashamed of a few of our fellow Americans who lost their moral compass in the awful crucible of war and occupation. We will ask why so many Europeans were so slow to learn the lessons of their own sad history and so unwilling to extend to others the freedom they now enjoy. And we will be amazed at so many humane and decent people willing to allow Saddam to reign from a palace rather than rot in a prison.

But, Mr. Speaker, history will show we were right to remove Saddam Hussein. It will demonstrate that the demise of his regime made the world better, America safer and gave the Iraqi people a chance for a decent future. It will vindicate the leaders, especially our President, who saw the danger, rallied the forces of decency and stayed the course.

Finally, and most appropriately, history will honor those Americans in uniform who once again answered the call of their country and liberated an oppressed people.

Mr. Speaker, the recent Senate Intelligence Committee Report on the status of Weapons of Mass Destruction in pre-war Iraq and the early release of material from the 9/11 Commission's Report that will appear later this week have done much to identify the mistakes, shortcomings and gaps in U.S. intelligence about Iraq. There is no doubt that the information we had about the weapons programs of Saddam Hussein was incomplete and, to some degree, inaccurate. It's worth noting that almost every other intelligence estimate in the world was similarly flawed.

The Senate Report and the 9/11 Commission Report, however, also demonstrate that in a number of respects, U.S. intelligence did get it right. Saddam Hussein did possess weapons—particularly missiles—which were forbidden under U.N. resolutions. Saddam and his cronies did, indeed, have contact and discussions at some level with al Qaeda and various terrorist groups. Terrorists did, in fact, use Iraq as a sanctuary, for training, and as a source of supply. Finally, if British reports are to be believed, President Bush was correct when he warned that Saddam was seeking nuclear material in Africa.

The real question, Mr. Speaker, is not whether U.S. intelligence was right in every particular. By its very nature intelligence is incomplete, imprecise, and imperfect. What America must resolve for itself is whether or not we were right to remove Saddam from power in Iraq. Is the world better off, America safer, and the situation in Iraq more hopeful without Saddam?

Not so long ago, Mr. Speaker, before the amnesia induced by the current political season, few serious Americans professed doubts about these issues. It was, after all, President Clinton who made regime change in Iraq the goal of U.S. policy. He received bipartisan congressional support when he did so. And, again, when President Bush made the case for war against Saddam in 2002 he received

bipartisan support in Congress. That support included the votes and the vocal support of those from the minority party who now seek to unseat the President and the Vice President in the current electoral campaign.

Lest we forget who and what Saddam Hussein was we should remind ourselves of his actions over the course of his political career. Saddam is a man who launched two regional wars in the Middle East. One cost nearly a million lives. The other required an international military coalition led by the United States to free the victim. Saddam Hussein has actively pursued and employed weapons of mass destruction since the 1980's. He has trained, armed, and patronized terrorists of various sorts. He kidnapped and killed foreign nationals from Kuwait. He attempted to assassinate a former U.S. President. And his forces routinely tried to down aircraft from the U.S. and other countries which were responsible for enforcing the U.N. sanctioned no-fly zones in Iraq.

Saddam's crimes and atrocities were not just directed against his neighbors and the international community. He was at least a brutal toward his own people. The 20 year plus reign of terror he directed against his fellow Iraqis almost defies belief. The countless murders, torture sessions, and rapes made him one of the 20th century's most feared and ferocious dictators. He gassed thousands of his own Kurdish subjects, poisoned the environment of those Arab marsh tribes who opposed his rule, and looted his country of its wealth. When Saddam's own people rose up against him in 1991 at our urging, he butchered them by the tens of thousands. The failure of the United States and its allies to support an uprising which we helped to encourage is, in my view, a sad chapter in our own history.

When American and Coalition forces finally came to Iraq twelve years later, what did they find? Not (at least yet) stockpiles of WMD's, to be sure. They found something far worse—dozens of mass graves containing an estimated 400,000 men, women and children murdered by the minions of Saddam Hussein. I invite my colleagues who so quickly and correctly condemn every shortcoming in the Coalition occupation of Iraq to spend equal time cataloging and criticizing the atrocities of the Hussein regime. If they need any help finding the information—for it is seldom chronicled in the elite media of our country—they should read the voluminous documents and numerous eyewitness accounts, talk to the lucky survivors, and visit with the thousands of grieving family members who can acquaint them with the scope and scale of Saddam's crimes against humanity.

Once they do, I suspect they will echo the sentiments of one young American soldier I met while in Iraq. He said, "the real question is not why did we come to Iraq, but why the whole world wasn't here years ago."

Given Saddam's record of international villainy, brutality and mass murder how can anyone argue that it would have been better to leave him in power? In power to do what? To resume his unending efforts to acquire and develop WMD's? To expand, develop, and formalize his evolving relationship with al Qaeda and other terrorist groups? To continue murdering his domestic opponents by the thousands while the world turned a blind eye?

It is revealing, Mr. Speaker, that the current critics of the war in Iraq never question wheth-

er or not that tortured country is better off without Saddam in power. In fact, the critics usually ignore the Iraqi people altogether when they discuss the conflict. It is as if the critics believe that the suffering of the Iraqi people under Saddam does not matter and that their future does not count. How convenient! How self-serving! And how morally bankrupt.

When the history of Saddam Hussein and the liberation of Iraq is written, Mr. Speaker, there will be many lessons to learn. We will wonder why our intelligence was not better. We will question some of the decisions we made with respect to the occupation. We will be ashamed of a few of our fellow Americans who lost their moral compass in the awful crucible of war and occupation. We will ask why so many Europeans were so slow to learn the lessons of their own sad history and so unwilling to extend to others the freedom they now enjoy. We will be amazed that so many humane and decent people were willing to allow Saddam to reign from a palace rather than rot in a prison. We will even question, as we now do with respect to World War II, why the United States took so long to confront evil and act to end the atrocities of a dangerous and evil dictator.

But, Mr. Speaker, History will show we were right to remove Saddam Hussein. It will demonstrate that the demise of his regime made the world better, America more secure, and gave the Iraqi people a chance for a decent future. It will vindicate the leaders—especially our President—who saw the danger, rallied the forces of decency, and stayed the course. Finally, and most appropriately, History will honor those men and women in uniform who once again answered the call of their country, liberated an oppressed people, and left America and the world safer and freer than they found it.

□ 2000

FINANCIAL FREEDOM NEEDED

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to adopt as part of my remarks the comments that the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) made before me.

The Blue Dogs have tried repeatedly to do something about this abuse of our country and what is going on here with regard to the Nation's balance sheet. I do not think that people of this country realize fully how bad it is and how quickly it is deteriorating. And I am talking about our Nation's financial picture.

We cannot be a strong and free country if we are in hock to every other country on Earth. We cannot be strong and free if we are broke. We cannot fix the problems our society faces as long as we are engaged in this financial madness that has been going on around here for the last 3½ years.

Let me just tell you something that is going to scare you. It is not fun to talk about and nobody talks about it because it is not much of a comfort to us as Americans when we beat on our chests and say how great we are. Let me tell you what we are doing. The privately held debt, that is the debt not